

REMARKS

The Examiner's Office Action of February 13, 2004 has been received and its contents reviewed. Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the consideration given to the above-identified application, and for indicating the allowance of claims 30-33, 37-41, 45, 58-63, 65, 67-71 and 74, and for indicating claims 29 and 72 as containing allowable subject matter.

By this Amendment, claims 28, 34, 55, 56, 57, 62 and 63 have been amended, and claims 29 and 72 have been cancelled. Accordingly, claims 28, 30-41, 45, 47, 48 and 55-71, and 73-74 are pending for consideration, of which claims 28, 30, 34, 37, 41, 55 and 58 are independent. By the actions above and the remarks below, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all the pending claims.


Initially, claims 56, 57, 62, 62 and 63 have been amended to insert "wherein" in order to place them in more proper claim format.

Referring now to the detailed Office Action, claims 28, 34-36, 47-48, 55-57, 64, 66 and 73 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Murade (U.S. Patent No. 6,330,044), and claims 29 and 72 stand objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim. In the interest of expediting the allowance of this application, Applicants have amended independent claims 28 and 55, as shown above, to recite the features of claims 29 and 72, respectively. Additionally, claim 55 has been further amended to avoid possible duplication of features due to the additional amended features from claim 72. Consequently, claims 29 and 72 have been canceled. Further, independent claim 34 has been amended, as shown above, to include features commonly recited in allowed claims 30, 37 and 58.

In view of the amendments set forth above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of all the pending objection and rejection.

While the present application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, should the Examiner find some issue to remain unresolved, or should any new issues arise which could be eliminated through discussions with Applicants' representative, then the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone in order that the further prosecution of this application can thereby be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,



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